

Weatherman Ian McCaskill got his first question on the Spotlight round in the Masterteam quiz wrong. The question- Who was Radio Caroline named after, he replied Princess Caroline. The answer of course Caroline Kennedy.

Radio Monique's hourly time signal was apparently recorded on the ship using a morse keyer.

Spin Magazine is back on sale in the United States after what the owners are describing as "The shortest hiatus in publishing history." Bob Guccione junior had to cease publication after his father stopped funding the venture. USA Today, another former offshore advertiser described Spin on its return as " Aggressive, Arcane, Overheated, but interesting"

After significantly increasing the audience figures for the afternoon show on Energy 103, following the departure of Gareth O'Callaghan, 103 Teenage broadcaster Cassidy Jones has moved to the Breakfast show on the relaunched Nova Power 103. Cassidy has been offered work in the UK ILR network, but has turned it down in the hope of achieving his ultimate goal, a job on BBC Radio One.

Nobody in Britain will forget the storm force winds of October, not least your editor, who oblivious to what was happening, woke on the morning of October 16th, heard a garden gate banging, went outside to shut it (without his glasses) and promptly walked into a tree which had landed down his front driveway. However listeners to the former Offshore Radio Veronica in Holland were warned some 48 hours before the storm by weatherman Harry Otten, a founder director of Meteocast, a proposed satellite TV weather station, which met with the political axe last year, but will now be launched early in 1988. Otten had the same data as the Meteorological office did in London, but simply interpreted it differently. Meantime think of BBC weatherman Michael Fish who earlier in the week had answered a viewers letter by saying there would be no hurricane, and was consequently taken to task by the media. Well he was technically right, although of hurricane force it wasn't a hurricane as it wasn't warm in the centre. As for Mr Fish, he's quite enjoying life in Lerwick.

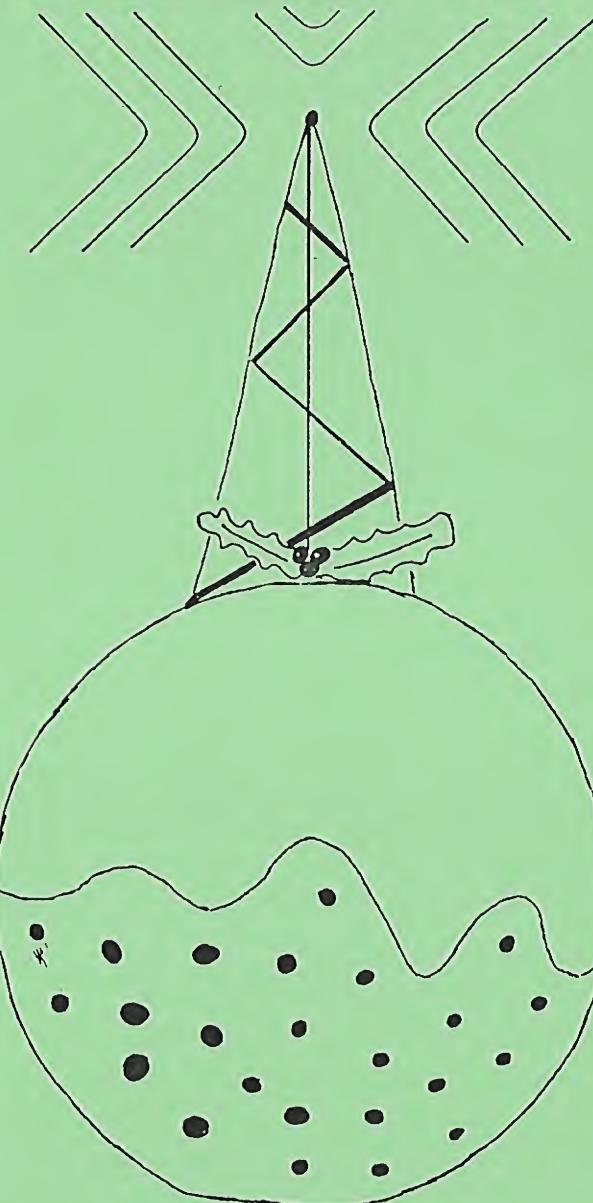
War has apparently broken out on the Soul airwaves of London, at least according to the Ad Lib column of the Evening Standard. Ron Tom of LWR has described BBC Radio London's Tony Blackburn as "A smutty fool, a fossil who's not changed his presentation in 15 years" Club DJ Alex Michaelson added "Blackburn degrades soul with his comments. He thinks he's really sexy for bored housewives- instead he just desecrates good music" Tony's reply: "My show is entertaining not smutty. . . who are these DJs? The Mary Whitehouses of the pirate world?", adding "I am an established soul DJ, a national figure, and I don't have to justify myself to these gentlemen" Tony is also reported to have said that if BBC Radio London is closed, as part of the BBC's latest cost cutting exercise he would buy the biggest transmitter he could find and set up a station himself.

The well known person behind Radio Sovereign recently offered to take over London's Weekend Oldies station Hits FM, writes Andy Walker. The aim was to turn the station into Sovereign, following the failed relaunch from Ireland. However the story gets better, the deal offered studios, office, full advertising and a 250 watt transmitter. My friend at Hits agreed with me that it was all lie in the sky, and he did not want any rubber cheques bouncing all over the place! He decided to turn down the offer. The man from Sovereign has more front than Woolworths!

An Unpleasant surprise awaits Peter Phillips when he returns from a holiday in America. The Caroline Organisation thought it best not to tell him about the collapse of the aerial mast until he was back in the United Kingdom, so not to spoil his time away.

DECEMBER 1987-JANUARY 1988

No. 19



# WAVELENGTH

December 1987/January 1988 - Number 19.

WAVELENGTH EDITOR: Adrian Cooke

FEATURE WRITERS: Neil Frazer, Andy Walker, Steve West, Mark Thyme and Mike Ross.

SHORT WAVE CONTRIBUTORS: Fodney R. Sixe and Richard Taversham.

November 25th, 1987 could have been the day when we once more lost Radio Caroline for good, and we must think ourselves lucky that the unthinkable, which occurred with the Sinking of the Mi Amigo did not happen again, and not for the first time it was largely due to station engineer Peter Chicago, who together with the rest of the team kept things together. I for one found the temporary absence of Caroline realising that although I am not a fan of the Top Forty, the uninterrupted music service of Caroline 558 is certainly the nearest I have to my ideal station. ILR should be taken in small doses.

Christmas has come around again so may I take this opportunity to wish you a Very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year, with thanks and much appreciation to those who helped Wavelength during 1987.

*Adrian Cooke*

- 3. OFFSHORE Diary;  
Mv Ross Revenge,
- 5. Mv Communicator.
- ON THE BANDS Short Wave;  
Great Britain,
- 6. Ireland,  
Europe,
- 7. Listener's Guide,
- 8. Address Book,  
Medium Wave/FM  
London,
- 9. Solid Gold Over London,
- 10. Merseyside,  
LPR in Court,  
. East Midlands,
- 11. Ireland,
- 12. DIY RADIO Receivers
- 13. RAYS OF SUNSHINE
- 15. CONFESSIONS OF AN ANORAK
- 16. LETTERS
- 18. THE INTERVIEW:CHARLIE WOLF
- 20. . . . AND FINALLY.

Front Illustration drawn by  
Mary-Ann Clover.

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## M.V. ROSS REVENGE

Plain sailing. . . Up to November 25th

24 hour operation was announced on October 21st, and Caroline 558 was benefiting from having a stable line up of presenters, to their regular listeners. A late start was made on both October 24th and 25th. On Saturday 24th the station opened at just after 0900 with Simon West presenting the mid morning programme, which was to be his last show during his present stint on board, although we understand that he had only planned a short stay on this occasion. Peter Phillips was not heard on this day. It was announced that Steve Conway would see us through the extra hour, due to the clocks in the United Kingdom being put back, however we decided not to stay up to check! On the 25th the start was noted at 0830, indicating that the station had not maintained the 24 hour schedule. The record slowed at 0838, and a closedown made at 0857 for essential engineering, returning at 1100 with Peter Phillips announcing that

"The engineers stripped down the offending article, rebuilt it and gave it a good kicking". Steve Conway and Mike Ross again shared the 2100 slot with two hours each. The revised schedule from October 26th;

0500 Peter Phillips  
0900 Jackie Lee  
1300 Nigel Harris  
1700 Tim Allen  
2100 Steve Conway  
2300 Mike Watts  
0100 Pat Brooks.

News;  
Steve Conway.

New advertisements were noted promoting the forthcoming Brighton Records Fayre and a Caroline Rockshow to be held in Kent, however by the 29th a further promotion cancelled the event in favour of one at the Breckland Sports Centre in Thetford.

Keith Francis was back on board on October 31st, and replaced Jackie Lee who took some time off. Keith held the morning airshift from November 2nd.

Mike Watts was not always present in time for his programmes, leaving Steve Conway to present an extended show in the late evening, despite the early starts needed for his morning newsreading. Mike though may have good cause to be missing due to his engineering duties. Mike missed on October 25th and again on November 2nd.

Steve Conway left the ship for November 8th, so newsreading was shared amongst the other staff on board, Peter Phillips also took a break. Joining the station were Chris Kennedy and Kevin Turner, both back for a return visit. Chris was heard at 0900, and again at 2100 for a further two hours, Kevin did not make his first appearance until the breakfast show of the following day, and Chris settled in to the late evening shift. The schedule from November 9th read;

0500 Kevin Turner	News:Early;
0900 Keith Francis	Nigel Harris
1300 Nigel Harris	Afternoon;
1700 Tim Allen	Kevin Turner
2100 Chris Kennedy	Late;
0100 Pat Brooks	Keith Francis

A major change occurred over the weekend of November, with an alteration in frequency for the programmes on Monique and Viewpoint. A Closedown was made on November 13th at 1900 (UK Time) with an announcement concerning the move. 558 remained on the air at this point, however no broadcasts were noted on either 558 or 963 the following day. On tune in Sunday 15th we found 819 clearly putting out Monique's programmes, consisting of non stop music and announcements concerning the move in the Dutch language, until 0800 when the regular Dutch religious programming commenced, and at 1200

the Monique Top 50, normally broadcast on Saturdays. 558 carried announcements in Dutch and English for the benefit of anyone not aware of the change.

In Eastern England the signal during the evening is a vast improvement on 963, with a clear strong signal throughout the all important hours, during which time Viewpoint programmes are transmitted. There had been annoyance expressed by many of the religious broadcasters of the poor signal on 963 caused by the 600 kilowatt transmitter of Radio Finland on the same channel.

819 is also used by Dublin station C102, and Chiltern Radio are on the next channel on 828 for the Luton area. We have a report of 819 being clearly audible in Scotland for Monique, although C could still be heard in the background.

Wednesday November 25th is a day which both staff and listeners of Radio Caroline, and sister services Viewpoint and Radio Monique will want to forget, for it was the day when the giant aerial tower crashed down to the North Sea. At 0250 in the morning it was decided to close the station down as the mast was showing severe signs of tension, arcing over towards 60 degrees. Half an hour later the guylines on the port side of the ship gave way, and the famous red and white mast began to fall. Chief Engineer Peter Chicago sounded the alarms, and life jackets were put on. The coastguards were informed of the situation, and they remained on standby throughout the emergency, along with a helicopter. DJ Nigel Harris was able to catch most of the event on Video tape, until the storm snatched the machine out of his hands. Later the remainder of the mast fell, snapping at the base. Early fears that the ship had become unstable were able to be dismissed, and only superficial damage had occurred to the deck.

It was at first hoped that the mast could be salvaged in some way, but this has now been abandoned in favour of a new 'T' type aerial, similar to one used by the Communicator. It is known that Ronan O'Rahilly has long been impressed with the signal Laser 558 were able to put out. The actual cause of the collapse may never be known, the October storms will have certainly have contributed, and the possibility of some corrosion has not been ruled out. There was also some damage to the Radio Monique Studio. Luckily there were no real injuries, although both Tim Allen and Keith Francis sustained some minor cuts and bruises. The day was spent cutting the mast free and planning the next move. Rumours began to circulate that the BEC were to put a carrier on 558 in an attempt to gain the frequency allocated to them for BBC Essex, despite it being in use for Offshore stations for the past 3½ years. There was also talk of the Communicator wanting to use the channel once more.

A temporary aerial was put up across the deck from poles welded to what was left of the aerial mast, and with the aerial insulator smashed during the fall a washing basket used instead. Test tones began shortly before noon on Friday December 4th, and Nigel Harris reopened the station at 1300, further transmissions were made on the Saturday, and a normal service resumed the following day, although news bulletins were not broadcast.

The schedule on this day was 0600 Tim Allen, 0900 Tony Peters, 1200 Keith Francis, 1500 Nigel Harris, 1800 Chris Kennedy. With only 900 watts power listening to the station, especially after dark is extremely difficult, but it must be remembered that a service IS being provided, Monday brought Tony Peters to the breakfast show, and four hour splits, indicating a full schedule. On Friday 11th, Steve Conway was on the 0600-1000 Breakfast Show, followed by Chris Kennedy at 1000, and Dutchman Wim de Walk at 1400. Mike Watts was able to replace Peter Chicago as engineer on board, and a daytime schedule looks set to continue until power can be sufficiently increased. At the moment the transmitters trip out if power is taken above 900 watts. It is expected that the station will leave the air for a few days, then return with an increased power output, once this is done the Viewpoint programmes will be aired on 558 until the 819 service can be restarted. It may not be until next spring that the stations get fully operational once more. In the meantime the plans for the short wave service remain unchanged.

## M.V. COMMUNICATOR

A possible pre Christmas start for Starforce 576 has not been ruled out, with the aerial masts welded together and just waiting to be raised. Mike Barrington, one of the two onboard engineers has done much work on improving the studio.

FM	88	92	96	100	104	108	MHz		
SW	6.0	6.5	8.0	10.0	13.0	18.0	MHz		
MW	54	60	70	80	100	120	140	160	kHz
LW	150	170	190	220	250	270	285	kHz	

## GREAT BRITAIN

SPECTRUM LEISURE COMMUNICATIONS (1) have been absent from the airwaves over the past two months following the operator moving house, however sister station Border Radio were noted back on the air on November 22nd using the regular 6299 channel. This follows repair of the storm damage sustained during the recent gales in the United Kingdom, and a short illness of the Border Radio announcer Harry Marshall. The laid back presentation of Harry's programmes is already attracting quite a following. SLC is planning a number of Christmas broadcasts, including a 24 hour service on 48 metres, and another band likely to be on 11, 12 or 13 mHz. This transmitter will be a narrow band FM type for experimental purposes. The 48 transmitter will be a new unit of at least 200 watts output, with 813 type valves operating at 2 or 3 kilovolts. It will be the first time SLC has used such power.

Reports for the last series of broadcasts have been good with one report recorded in Algeria at 0730, one morning.

RADIO EAST CLAST COMMERCIAL (2) have now changed their frequency to 6310, as of their November 1st broadcast. RECC hope to remain on the channel for future broadcasts. In addition to the regular 1st Sunday broadcasts further transmissions were made in November on the 8th and 15th, in order to test the stability of the frequency into the afternoon. A special telephone number has been announced for direct contact with the studio on Christmas morning only, it is 04855 2742.

RADIO APOLLO were on the air November 8th, followed by an amusing send up of a rather bad sounding relay station under the name of Radio Unid, the jock on which spent most of the time announcing the Box 5 address and giving his thanks to Apollo's Dave Scott for the relay. The frequency was 6285 which has become Apollo's regular channel, further transmissions are planned during December, including one at Christmas.

BRITAIN RADIO INTERNATIONAL (3 & 4) made it on the air for three subsequent Sundays from November 15th, following their frequency change to 6306, the former channel of 6200 was found to be too close to the broadcast band, which made reception on domestic receivers difficult. Reports for 6200 varied, but there were some good reports, likewise 6306 is finding favour. The main November programmes were transmitted on the 5th Sunday. Christmas programme will include the regular Boxing Day Party Show with station regulars Roger Davis, Jayne, and Adrian Cooke joined by a number of guests, in addition on Christmas Sunday (27th) a special guest appearance will be made by Freddie Archer, who for many years ran Radio Caroline Shortwave.

RADIO CAVEIRISH (5) made a welcome return to the 48 metre band on November 15th, following an earlier transmission over the August Bank Holiday. On 6235 the DJs were Phil Collins (1100-12 Noon) and Tony Sharp (12-1300) The station first began broadcasting in 1977, and now promise a regular monthly schedule. Phil has also been on Atlanta Radio, plus various FM stations.

CRUSIN' SOLID GOLD RADIO (6) is the latest All Oldies station, which commenced broadcasting on November 1st, as part of the Scottish Free Radio Network, and now continues with a regular monthly schedule. DJ Kenny King as a lively presentation style which makes the pace of the station very fast.

RADIO 49 (7) has returned to the air with its rock format, and a transmission power of 15 watts. Main DJ is Steve Most, and it would appear that the Radio Pamela name has now been dropped permanently. Transmissions have been noted on 6205 and 6815, and on November 1st, as a relay via Westside Radio on 6280.

WONDERFUL FREE RADIO LONDON-WFRL (2) continue on the 2nd Sunday, featuring Andy Walker, and at 1100 Tender Trip with Iain Johnston reporting on the Offshore scene.

RADIO ORION (8) are on the air most Saturdays and every Sunday on 6290 with a Top 40 format with Mike Wilson, Paul Johnson, and Steve Most, who presents an Oldies programme.

WLR (9), again part of the Scottish Free Radio Network are currently operating a 1st and 5th Sunday schedule on 6318, putting in an excellent signal for the United Kingdom. In addition the station can sometimes be heard following other stations in the network. The format is a mix of Top Forty Sounds, Radio News and general chat, put together by John Dean. The jingle package is that used by the Irish station of the same name.

RADIO SOUTHSEA (10) is transmitted once a month on 7340 with a DJ line up of Terry Banks, Richard Grahame, Jonathon Rogers and Penny Stevens, in addition the station produces specially made programmes on tape, full details from the mailing address.

EMR-EUROPEAN MUSIC RADIO (11) one of the most popular Free Radio stations of the 1970s has made a return to the airwaves, and carried out a number of test transmissions (noted October 25th, November 26th and December 7th on 6725) Former EMR Staff member Roger Tate is believed to be involved with the project, a third Sunday schedule is proposed, commencing December 20th.

RADIO ELECTRA (12) who made a transmission on November 29th caused some confusion with their announcement of the Rosewarne Lowns address during the broadcast on 6275. They had requested to use the maildrop some time ago and the operator of the address had not realised that his address was still open to them following its close earlier this year.

FALCON RADIO (13) intend to return to the air at Christman.

## IRELAND

RADIO RAINBOW (14) have announced that they intend to apply for a Short Wave licence to broadcast a service to Europe as part of the recently announced Irish legislation. Kieran Murray presented his last regular Free Radio Programme on November 29th, he now leaves BoyneSide Radio, the local station where he was also a regular presenter to work closer to home at Lublin's Liberties Local Radio. Radio Rainbow continues to be heard relaying religious programming from the People's Gospel Hour and Good News Radio.

Other stations currently on the Short Wave from Ireland include Riverside Radio, Westside Radio.

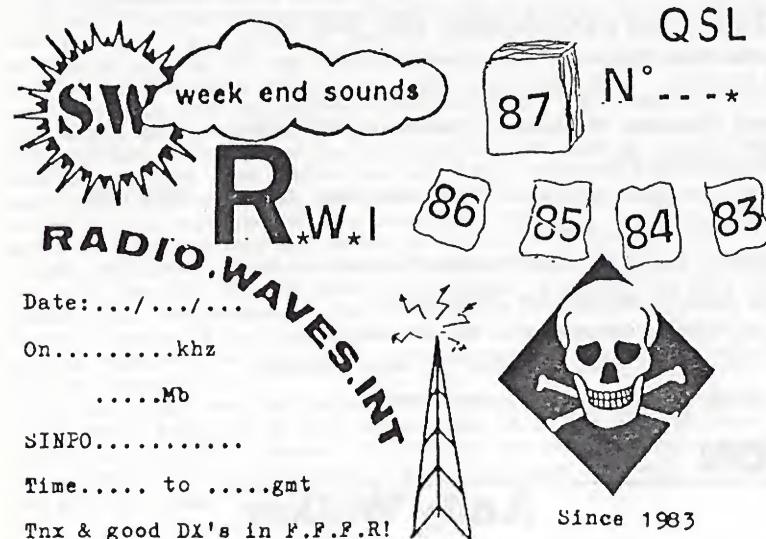
## EUROPE

SUPERCLAN RADIO who originate from the Netherlands were raided by the Dutch R&D on November 8th at 0720 UTC, following a complaint from Portishead Radio who stated that Superclan on 6204 was just one kilohertz away from their emergency channel of 6205. Although nobody was on site at the time of the broadcast a 60 watt Phillips transmitter, and a cassette recorder was confiscated. Superclan had been on regularly over the previous few weeks on both Saturdays and Sundays, with some highly professional programming. A transmission was made on November 14th with a 40 watt transmitter, but it is unknown when the station will make its next broadcast (15) (FRS Goes IX)

FRS HOLLAND missed their November broadcast following the loss of the transmission facilities at Superclan Radio, who had relayed the station since August. A return is promised for December 20th when the station will have their traditional Christmas Party with requests and greetings from the station's many listeners.

RADIO MARABU (17) has resumed its regular transmissions, and are on the air every second Sunday between 1000 and 1200 UTC on 6318. The official reopening took place on November 8th with shows presented by Mark Craison and guest IJ Marc Jones. The Marabu Indie Charts were also presented for the first time. New station information is now available.

RADIO WAVES INTERNATIONAL (18) have celebrated four years on the air by publishing a booklet on the station. The Free Radio Log gives a background to the station, cartoons, a summary of magazines available and Free Radio loggings. RWI promises an increase of power in the near future from 18 watts to 50 watts.



## LISTENER'S GUIDE

### TABLE OF REGULAR FREE RADIO BROADCASTERS.

6240	Radio Rainbow (including relays)	IRL	Every Sunday
6280	Westside Radio (including relays)	IRL	Every Sunday
6290	Radio Orion	GB	Every Saturday and Sunday
6295	Radio Krystel	GB	4th Sunday
6299	Spectrum Leisure Communications/ Border Radio	GB	Every Sunday
6301	WFRL:Wonderful Free Radio London	GB	2nd Sunday
6306	BRI:Britain Radio International	GB	4th and 5th Sundays
6310	Radio East Coast Commercial	GB	1st Sunday
6318	Scottish Free Radio Network	GB	Every Sunday
6725	EMR:European Music Radio	GB	3rd Sunday
6850	Radio Skywave	IRL	Every Sunday
Other regular stations with no fixed schedule			
6209	Riverside Radio	IRL	
6273	Radio Buttercup	IRL	
6275	Radio Waves International	F	
6285	Radio Apollo	GB	

# ADDRESS BOOK

1. BM Broadcasting, London, WC1N 3XX.
2. Po Box 5, Hunstanton, Norfolk, PE36 5AU.
3. 32 Victoria Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 3NG.
4. Postbus 19074, 3501 DB, Utrecht, The Netherlands.
5. 128 Kingfisher Drive, Eastbourne, Sussex.
6. 100 Watson Crescent, Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, AB4 6WS, Scotland.
7. Flat A, 129B, Milton Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2CR.
8. 82B Edgewood Road, Rednall, Birmingham, B45 8SG.
9. 23 South Beechwood, Edinburgh, EH12 5TR, Scotland.
10. 10 Bromyard Crescent, Paulsgrove, Portsmouth, PO6 3SP
11. Po Box 65, London, WC1.
12. 3 Rosewarne Cottages, Rosewarne Downs, Camborne, Cornwall, TR14 0BE.
13. Po Box 1686, Dublin 1, Ireland.
14. 151 Moneymore, Drogheda, County Louth, Ireland.
15. Po Box 50, 6803 AA Arnhem, The Netherlands.
16. Postbus 41, 7700 AA Dedemsvaart, The Netherlands.
17. Postfach 220 342, D-5600, Wuppertal 22, West Germany.
18. BP 130, 92504, Rueil Malmaison, Cedex, France.

## LONDON

### Andy Walker

It's the time of year when the DTI start to get low on money, so raids are less at this time, but they normally save up enough for a big busting day just before Christmas. So far things have been great on the Capital's pirate airwaves, with some funny bits, like RFL- RADIO FREE LONDON. The Sunday night broadcast on November 15th. The Rig came on, then the pre-recorded programmes, but the machine was playing up after 30 to 40 minutes of trying to put things right, the RFL crew must have gone off to the pub, leaving the automatic equipment on the roof of a tower block in South London not knowing that the machine was starting to play faster and faster the remaining five hours of programmes. For the rest of the evening only a carrier remained on 92.6, that's pirate radio for you. The following day, and for the rest of the week LWR had big problems, four raids in the space of 7 days. Was it the DTI or some unknown persons taking LWR off? Surely if it was the DTI all of the other South London stations would have been busted too, which makes me think that it was something to do with some other persons. Maybe revenge attacks from K-JAZZ, who a few weeks before had a rig stolen by LWR, and were caught doing so. Rumour has it that LWR are, or have starting a second service, which makes me think that the new reege station ROCKS FM on 93 is the off shoot of LWR, if so, they sat on top of SOLAR RADIO over the weekend and hi-jacked the channel. Here we go again. This action has prompted Solar to return to 24 hour broadcasts to beat the pirates (Ha get it!) using 93FM.

Friday November 20th saw the premiere broadcast of London's newest "oldies" station on 89.6FM NMR- NEWS MUSIC RADIO carries 56 minutes of solid gold hits with about 4 minutes of news at the top of the hour - see feature - Letford based station ROCK TO ROCK are really taking the biscuit with an aerial sitting on a 30 foot mast on a high tower block, shining into the sun for all the world to see, and hanging out a very good signal to London, as are Teckham's SKY RADIO on 91.6, 24 hours in Stereo. London's

airwaves are becoming more and more packed with pirates of a weekend with the return of K-JAZZ on 94.3 who use Starpoint Radio's Tx on a Sunday. KFM, also on 94.3, Chicago on 94.6, City Radio 94.5 and Kiss on 94 FM, that is one part of the band which is well bunged up! Then there's LWR 92.1, RFL 92.5, Studio One 92.6 and Solar on 93 FM, Another part where there's no room or is there? Monday 30th, The DTI had a day out raiding TKO in the morning, LWR, together with RTR. On Monday evening it was reported to me that the DTI nearly found Solar Radio's studio, but a quick thinking DJ wacked past them on the landing, went down to the bottom of the block and buzzed them on the intercom to switch off. At 2350 NMR was raided, ten minutes before the end of my programme. I don't think I've ever moved so fast to switch off the link. Within seven minutes myself and another station member had driven to the site, and cut in front of the DTI driving onto the estate, to see four of them in a white 'B' reg Maistro with a three piece ladder on the roof, Eric in the back seat, which then sped off at high speed. Later we went up to the roof to find the entrance door pulled off its hinges, and all the coax cables cut in approved DTI fashion. LWR returned within 24 hours of being raided, on low power due to being hit very hard by raids. Rock to Rock have changed site from Deltford and Solar have re-sited their studio to a safer house. The myth that night time broadcasting in London is safer than during the day was crushed. The other week when rock station RFM 94.5 FM carried out a test they got busted at 2 o'clock in the morning!

Radio TKO have changed name and format, and are now called CD 102.4, They not only play CDs, but the music is a mixture of everything Rock, Pop, Album Tracks, etc. The service started on Saturday 5th December, Radio TKO returned to the airwaves at 5pm that afternoon. CD is on air every Saturday. New station Passion FM on 90.6 have a good signal and strong modulation in my area of London.

Finally I must say that Radio One's London FM transmitter can be picked up on six other spots on my radio as well as 104.8. The DTI Act quick enough when a pirate station causes interference, but when it comes to the mighty BBC, Nothing is ever done! Have a great Christmas and Happy New year, I'll see you next time.

AW

## SOLID GOLD OVER LONDON

NMR - NEWS MUSIC RADIO is London's newest Oldies station broadcasting on 89.6 FM. NMR offers four minutes of News at the top of the hour along with 56 minutes of Solid Gold Hits from the past, our slogan, "Bringing you the Hits of Yesterday, and the News of Today. No other pirate station does News that's what makes us Unique. I spent about an hour on the roof of the tower block used for the transmissions with our engineer one cold Wednesday night while he installed the equipment, then back to the studio to set up the link. The set up is remote controlled, switching the main tx on, and off via the link systems. A number of calls were made on the station's Hotline answer-phone on every broadcast, and no one had a bad thing to say about the programmes, which is very encouraging. NMR had its first raid on November 30th, at 2350 - See London News- The same night we had the full studio fitted, ready for live broadcast. A meeting the following night between Roger Ross, Owner of the station, and Head of News, DJ Johnny Reagee and myself took place in a pub in Brixton. It was decided to come back on the air, live all day 7 days a week in the New Year, once a full line up of presenters had been worked out. With further recruitment to the station NMR will then be able to get advertising, and make itself the biggest, and best oldies station that has ever broadcast to the capital. That is our aim, let's hope it works out

Andy Walker.

## MERSEYSIDE

Like the Capital city Raids on Free Radio stations in the Merseyside area currently seem to be at a minimum level, however of late there have been two important court cases.

Radio MERSEYWAVES continue to operate regularly from Friday to Monday on 1242, from 0900-0300. Several members of the team were in court on November 5th. Altogether 13 members were present, most of whom were fined £75 plus £50 costs, The exceptions being Billy, and Dave Benites, who were both fined in excess of £150. The total fines came to £1,200. However Faula pleaded not Guilty and the case (as is the court procedure) was adjourned to be heard again on January 8th, 1988. Merseywaves were not heard on December 13th. 9 Meadowfoot Road, Moreton, Wirral, L46 7UW is the address here.

LIVERPOOL PIRATE RADIO are now back on the air following their recent court appearance (see below). Phil Davies is at the helm once more. LPR is on the air Sundays on 1404kHz, and can be contacted at 50 Elkstone Road, Norris Green, Liverpool L11 2TB.

NORTH COAST RADIO are operating Friday to Monday on 1550 from around 0800 to 0200. The mailing address is 18 Downham Drive, Heswall, Wirral, L60 5RF.

RADIO ATLANTIS, operating Saturday and Sunday on 1197 from 1000-2400. A recent recruit to the station is John Lwyer, who besides being on Atlantis in previous years has done work for Radio Caroline and more recently at the local ILR station Radio City. 150 Rake Lane, Liscard, Wallasey, L45 1JW is the place to write to.

VERONICA 104 have now reverted back to an afternoon schedule starting at 1500, as of November 8th. The station continues until 2200 most weeks. DJ Dean Bartlett recently had a member of local band the LAs as studio guest during his 1800-2000 programme. 81 Lark Lane, Liverpool 17 8UF is where to get in contact with the station.

with thanks to Allen Dean, Anoraks UK, Tim Jackson and Neil Frazer.

## LPR IN COURT

LPR DJ Phil Davies was at Liverpool Magistrates court on October 28th. Charged under his real name of Philip Williams he pleaded Guilty to the offence, and was fined £100 and ordered to pay £50 costs. Mr Williams spoke to Wavelength's Neil Frazer on his reaction to the hearing " I had a good solicitor and the fine was less than what I expected, I was shocked actually, I was expecting at least a three or four hundred pound fine. There were however no bad feelings about the DTI Mr Williams said that they were only doing their job. The case came only a few weeks after the incident in which FM station Merseyside Free Radio had caused severe splatter to the Gas Board and local Doctor services, and there was worry expressed that this might affect the sentencing " I thought I was going to get the book thrown at me" he explained, stating that LPR does not cause any interference itself "We don't interfere on any other station or block any other people off at all, we just get on with our station". In the future LPR is hoping to extend its hours from 8.00 to midnight, and add Mondays and Fridays to the weekend schedule.

## EAST MIDLANDS

**John Hickling**

### BRADFORD

Radio VERONICA was heard on 105.5 MHz with a fairly good signal; the male presenter (Stephen?) said that a new 250 watt transmitter was being tested. The broadcast was heard on Saturday 3rd between 1.50 am and 2.15 am. They usually broadcast late nights Sundays and Wednesdays.

### BIRMINGHAM

PCRL could just be heard on 103.5 MHz with constant co-channel interference from BBC Radio Nottingham's transmitter on 103.8 MHz and ILR Radio Hallam on 103.6 MHz. The broadcast was monitored for 20 minutes 12.40 am and 1.00 am on Monday 5th October. On Monday 26th (early morning) the signal was much stronger and clearer.

RADIO ENTERPRISE FM was monitored on 90.9 MHz on Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th during the early hours (12.15pm-3.00 am) the station is similar to PCRL playing Soul/Reagge type music. ENTERPRISE's broadcasts were fairly strong but can only be heard after BBC Radio 3 closes down. An address was given as PO BOX 2004, Birmingham, B5 7LU. A telephone number for advertising was also given as 021 440 2698

### DERBY

RADIO FREEDOM was heard doing one of its occasional broadcasts to the city of Derby on 105 MHz FM and 1242 kHz MW. The FM transmitter appears to be a low powered mono one while the MW one is much stronger and can be heard very clearly particularly when using the ANORAKS UK mw loop frame serial. Three DJs heard on the station were John Bishop, Tony Clark and Paddy McGinty. The broadcast was heard Sunday 4th between 2.45pm and 9.15 pm Most of the music heard consisted of modern Rock/Funk type music including several tracks by the Beastie Boys. The station doesn't give out a mailing address or telephone number.

### LONDON

TKO and LWR have been heard between 90 and 93 MHz after BBC RADIO 3 closes down, every night at around 12.30 am. The reception of these stations is usually poor, depending on atmospheric conditions- the signals often tend to fade in and out at varying rates, sometimes they can't be heard at all.

Free Radio Monitoring Service for the East Midlands.

RAY BURKE, the Irish Minister for Communications has announced the long awaited details for the future of radio in Ireland. The Sound Broadcasting Bill was announced to the Dail, the Irish Parliament on November 20th and promises 225 licences, in varying forms in a bill which seems set to tidy up the radio dial in the Irish Republic and end officially the sixty year monopoly held by the state run RTE Networks. The proposals give two radio stations each to Dublin and Cork with one station in most of the remaining Irish counties. 100 town stations with a ten mile radius and a further 100 neighbourhood stations with a 2-5 mile radius will ensure that Ireland's Radio saturation will continue. Further, another 200 neighbourhood stations might follow. There will be much self regulation, with 'market forces' doing most of the control. An independent organisation will be set up to award the licences, which will cost stations 3% of their annual income. The licences are set to be brought into operation next spring with fines of between 800 and 2000 Irish Pounds for those who don't comply. The only real restriction is the need for 20% of airtime, which must be as News and Current affairs. In addition to the local stations. A National licence will also be awarded. Effectively what could happen is the unofficial legislation of the current system, although Mr Burke pointed out that the current stations would not be given any special treatment, and would be expected to close down just before the new system came into being.

The outlook from the stations has been optimistic, the newly relaunched Radio Nova merged with Energy 103 on November 25th at 1500 to become Nova. The News magazine 'Dublin Today' was re-introduced at 1800, and half hourly news bulletins are given during the day with an emphasis on Irish News, which has perhaps hindered the overall sound of the station, even to listeners in the republic itself. It is rumoured that Sunshine Radio will replace their Hot Hits format with one of more easy listening music.

# MarkThyme

D.I.Y. RADIO with Mark Thyme Hello! This time we're giving the soldering iron a rest, and with thoughts of the season of giving (and getting) in mind let's look at one or two of the current portable receivers for the DXer.

REVIEW-MATSUI MR-4000 This is a new general-coverage set available from one place you would never think of selling such a thing-Currys. At £129.99 it represents very good value for the performance offered. Note that Tandy are selling the identical set with the "Realistic" name, as DX-440, but be warned as they are charging £20 extra! In many ways the set is a bit like the old Sony ICF-2001, but with better performance, and without the heavy battery drain that set had. The set offers continuous coverage from 150KHz to 29999KHz, with a small gap from 446-454 KHz, the intermediate frequency. On the 150-1620 KHz area it is a single-conversion design, but from 1620 up it is dual-conversion with the i.f. around 55Hz. The FM band of 87.5-108.5Hz is a standard 10.7Hz single conversion design. The unit is powered by 6 "D" cells, with 2 "AA" cells for the clock/microprocessor. Battery drain is around 100mA, quite average for this type of set. The set has the usual sockets for external BCK, tape(DIN) and stereo headphones. There is an external aerial jack, but this is only for 1620KHz-108.5Hz, so if you wish to use, say, a medium-wave loop aerial you'll have to couple it externally to the set, using two turns, or even putting the set inside the loop. On FM the set is really a stereo tuner, driving both the DIN and the headphones; note the headphone jack disconnects the internal mono speaker/amp. Signal strength is shown by a 5-LCD bargraph, and is useful. Slider controls for volume, bass, treble, and stereo balance are front mounted, as are two knobs for BFO pitch and RF attenuator. The 3 front slide switches control the AM narrow/wide filter/mono/stereo, BFO on/off, and Lock which besides locking all micro functions stops the set being switched on accidentally. 22 keypad buttons (soft!) control P, A, L, M, and SW (i.e. the SW "broadcast" bands) frequency entry, up/down scanning, clock/freq., store, recall and auto scan, stopping on a "busy" channel. The 1-9 buttons are also used for entering and storing 9 frequencies. Also each band key remembers the last freq. that was keyed in. The user-friendly design shows you the time, frequency, band and if you've made an error? 3 buttons at the top of the set are for light, timer and sleep setting. In addition to the keypad tuning, there is also a rotary encoder(knob) for tuning, which even features variable slew rate, so the faster you turn the knob the quicker it changes. Tuning on AM is in 1KHz steps, and 50MHz steps on FM. PERFORMANCE This is what you want to hear I'm sure. The sensitivity is very good, especially on HF and FM. It could be better on LW and a bit better on SW, but it is not designed for medium-wave BCK, although it works really well with a loop antenna. What really makes this set's the sensitivity, selectivity, dynamic range, and image-rejection on short-wave. Side by side, this set performs as well as my Yaesu FTG-7700 with external pre-amp! You can hear all those QRP Exers on 40 metres, and I have heard many U.S. chans on 20 metres, even though all I was using was the telescopic whip. The narrow filter is around 3.5KHz wide, and very useful for both AM and SSB. The BFO is stable enough to be able to listen to DSB broadcasts with no need to make any adjustment. The wide filter is around 10KHz to listen to strong and/or local stations. The FM performance is also good, and during the current lift many stations from Europe have been heard. The audio is excellent, and there is absence of any synthesiser noise on any band. My sole complaint on the set is that after a minute of tuning, the display automatically reverts to showing the time, although as soon as you touch the mode button or the tuning knob, it goes back to frequency display; this is of little importance. CONCLUSION - The MATSUI R-4000 is excellent value and recommended. Size 300x160x60 mm.

Well if your finances won't stretch as far as the previous set, let's look at another, cheaper set that might be ideal for you or a young radio fan in your family. The SAISHO SW2000 retails for a mere £24.95, and yet despite this and its small size(175x75x10mm) it offers a performance not seen on some larger models. Pocket-sized, it is ideal for travellers too.

REVIEW This set is a single-conversion design, and covers AM only on LW 145-235 KHz, MW 525-1611 KHz, and SW-six bands 5.8-6.2 Hz, 7.0-7.5 Hz, 9.0-9.95, 11.48-12.15, 15.05-15.6, and 17.45-18.1 MHz; i.e. 49, 41, 31, 25, 19, and 16 m. bands. There is also an unusual FM band covering 88-136 Hz, but more of that later. The set is powered by 2 "AA" batteries, which last a long time as the drain is a mere 18mA, even so an external DC jack is provided, as is one for earphone. There is a push-button off/on switch, a knob for tuning, a slider for volume, and 2 slider switches, for SW/LW/FM, and SW 1-6. A telescopic whip is used for SW and FM, and a red LED shows signal strength. PERFORMANCE Sensitivity on all bands is quite good, certainly quite weak medium wave stations can be heard. It can certainly pick up all the strong signals on SW that are broadcast to and from Europe, e.g. BBC World Service Radio Netherlands etc. I have even heard some of the stronger stations on 48 metres. This set is hampered by its lack of a good filter on AM, I would guess the selectivity is about 15KHz, about the same as the average radio-cassette. So expect a few whistles. Also the image rejection is not great, so that you may hear some strong 41 meter stations on 49 meters. I noticed the coverage on 49m only went up to 6240, so by a slight adjustment to one of the internal trimmers means I can now hear stations up to 6315 KHz. One strange feature is the extended FM band. It is meant to cover the "air" band, that's 118-136 which it does; but because the FM detector has good AM rejection and AFC, although you can tune into the aircraft you get very little audio out! (Aircraft still use AM, and have done since the 1930's) So the airband coverage is of very little use. Despite the fact that all the FM band is crammed into 3cm of tuning dial length, the ability to separate stations is good, as indeed is the sensitivity; many FM pirates in the London area can be heard. The sound through the tiny 2-inch speaker is also quite loud and very pleasant and not tinny. CONCLUSION This set has obvious limitations, but is certainly worth considering especially if you want something pocket-sized. It certainly outperforms the average Russian set, but certainly do not buy if it is your sole intention to listen to the airband (A cheap Sharp set is better) You can buy this set with the Saisho label from Dixons anywhere; also seen under other names.

Well that's all from me for 1987. Next time we'll have another feature for you, but until then compliments of the season and Happy 1988. 73, Mark

## Bob Powell

Sunshine news going back two and a half to three years ago decided to stop plagiarising the news and we set out to form an independent news service which we have achieved and gained NUJ membership. Our news is gathered by telephone and by stringers, our foreign news comes from Ceefax and Oracle, the NUJ allows us to this because of our limited resources. We do monitor RTE, the national station and Radio Ulster, but we do not use any of their stories unless we ourselves get them. The format has changed a lot in fact the whole station format has changed since last July, when Mr Bill Cunningham came over. He is what most people would describe as a radio doctor, he's spent something like 19, 20 years in the states revamping stations which were low in the ratings, and making them number one. He's effectively done that here in a very short space of time, and improved on the figures. The format that is here at the moment, the Hot Hits format requires a lot of enthusiasm and this is what is felt should come across the air, it has proved very successful, and combined with promotions, the promotion on at the moment is the big Kahuna, where the individual who will win, a boy or girl, anybody over the age of fourteen, if they win they will get £45,000 worth of prizes and end up as a jock on the station. But it has proved very successful this new format and is continuing, our latest survey which was carried out by Rotan marketing group, within the strict guidelines of the marketing institute, and gave us 48% of the listenership. We are hoping that legislation will be provided, due to what you could describe as an inertia with successive Governments over a period of about seven years there has been no legislation provided. With regard to the illegal situation it is only due to the lack of

legislation, everything else at this station in particular is above board. We have spearheaded the areas of paying copyright, all the PSI social insurance taxes have been paid by the individuals and the only thing which stops us from having the legal status is this Government and we are hoping that this will be rectified at the end of the year. The main problem with the last Government, the new Government was formed in this country in March, now whilst it's a minority Government it is doing things, and with the help of the opposition in a form you could say that we have in effect a national Government, though it's not formally based it has been happening. The Government previous to that was a coalition Government which was made up of Fine Gael and the Labour party, now due to Labour Party ideology they insisted after one was produced. The minister for Communications, Mr Mitchell at the time, certain people in the Labour Party, their ideology at the time was that commercially these stations shouldn't have the 51%, they were prepared to go up to 49%, but generally I think he felt that the commercial end is warranted for the competitive spirit and for it to be successful. So at this stage the Government has actually yesterday, the Fine Fail Government, Mr Burke, the minister for communications has stated that legislation will be brought in by the end of the year, now what's going to happen to us in the interim we don't know, but we've been living in this limbo for these many years and will continue. It could be comparable to something I believe is in France where licences are given out and people compete over a certain period, and after that period the better ones will have the licences. I would imagine that there will be a test period it was felt before that we would have a situation whereby there will be stipulations whereby so much of news would have to be incorporated, so much community, but with the success of the stations which have been here which have been mostly commercially orientated I would imagine that is the form but as yet we don't know. The minister Mr Burke stated earlier this year that he was talking to people in Cork with a contingent of RTE. Following this report in the papers, it was reported that he said that he would close down the stations before introducing, he said that no pirate station would get a licence. Now it was felt I suppose by a number of people that it wasn't possibly plicating the people in RTE who throughout the last few years have opposed pirate radio. So I feel, and this is a personal opinion that legislation will come in. There are a lot of people working in pirate radio, in station alone you've something like in the region of 46 people, a good number of those have been in it for a number of years, and they face unemployment, and that is something that he hasn't really considered I don't think yet, but which would be a point which would be strongly made to him, should that arise. There is regardless of the legal situation, there is a general respect for people, like the people who run this company who have been seen to run it properly and in accordance with everyday business and in a proper manner.

Bob Powell is now working with RTE Radio Two.

June 29, 1987



## Mike Ross

Reading through the latest issue of Wavelength, especially the London news makes me realise how free radio has changed since I became involved about eight years ago.

Radio Caroline had just disappeared below the surface of the North Sea, CB radio was the big thing, and free radio meant listening out for EMR, Zodiac, Zenith etc on Short wave on a Sunday morning and trying to hear Radio Jackie over the noise of the planes during infrequent visits to Heathrow Airport. I was looking at two years in London, not exactly the nicest place to live in, my 'reward' for choosing a specialised course for college. Autumn 1980 saw me living in a student hostel in South Kensington, doing my best to survive on a student grant (with beer at £1 a pint it's not easy).

At this time the main FM stations were Invicta, RFL, London FM, Uptown Radio and Thameside Radio. Thamsside, in common with most of the other stations, would only broadcast for three hours on a Sunday evening since it was thought to be too risky to go on longer. Just after the start of the programme they would announce a location - usually near a tube station - where you could meet the staff from the station; Alex (with tape recorder for requests), Bob Edwards and sometimes Dave 'Birdman' depending on who was at the tx site.

I had been to an o.b and party at Hammersmith(?) which the station were holding to celebrate their third (?) birthday and was on my way back to the tube station chatting to a few other like-minded anorak types, one of whom introduced himself as Chris Miles. Apparently he ran a station somewhere in the midlands called Nene Valley Radio or something like that and was now occasionally on as London Music Radio. To my surprise on getting off the train I found that he lived about 400 yards away so we returned to his place where he showed me a typical anorak room; about 8 foot by 12 foot, knee deep in paperwork, circuits, electronic bits and pieces etc, and in one corner a studio consisting of two technics decks, a cassette deck and mixer, all covered with records, paper etc. In other words a mess, the wiring only being surpassed by that reputed to be in the WMR Studio.

Chris Miles is a radio genius. He's one of those people who can produce a full spec FM rig in ten minutes from a biscuit tin and two pieces of Cardboard well not quite like that but it gives you the idea. I remember one time when he was sharing the tx with Zodiac FM, LMR on Saturday evening and Zodiac on Sunday afternoon, and the tx site was raided near to the end of the transmission : Chris had by the time Zodiac started, completely built and installed a high power (about 80watts) FM tx which sounded just as good, or better than the original. He could seemingly throw some components together and get them to oscillate. Miracles!

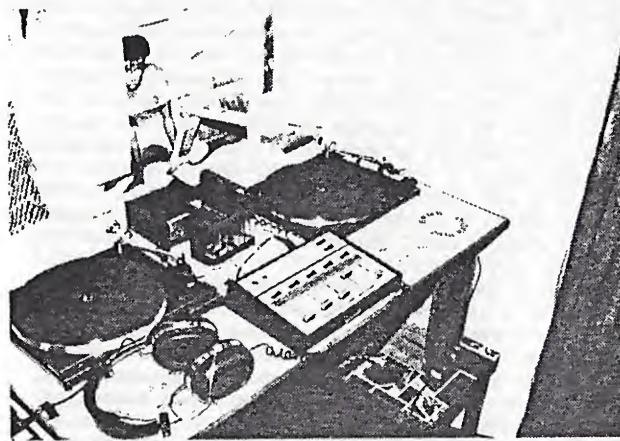
Broadcasts from LMR became more regular, and assistance was given by John Dawson (South London Radio/RFL) and Andy Allman. By the time I left London I had developed quite a paranoia about tower blocks, and I think it all started during early 1981 when we decided to do a broadcast from a block just around the corner.....

It wasn't much to look at, just two six storey 'houses' one about ten feet apart behind the other. The advantage was that a friend lived with his parents in one flat and as a result we had a key! To get to the roof involved going up to the third floor, unbolting a door and going out onto the fire escape, and climbing up it onto the roof where it linked to the other tower block on which there was a lift house. The tx aerial was tied to a pole on one of the chimneys and the tx and link receiver put in the lifthouse, power coming from the light fitting. At the time we were linking on 86MHz with low power and my trusty Sony radiocassette came in useful as the rx, with the S-meter being used to switch on the tx on 94MHz. We had got set up and Andy was in the studio playing music over the link, everything ready for the start, when something totally unexpected happened: The only way to and from the roof

was through the door and up the fire escape, and since there were few windows that overlooked it and it was pitch black outside there was little chance of being spotted, so imagine our worry when we heard a voice calling up to us "I know you're up there I'm calling the Police if you don't come down. . ." We had heard the door opening and had dived into the lift house which was the only cover around, sitting there for the next ten years and waiting for the person to come up and find us. When nothing happened we cautiously looked out and, seeing the coast was clear, threw the gear into the house and rushed down the ladder to make our escape .....only to find that the door was locked!

This then was the problem; stuck on top of a house that's not yours, with a load of incriminating equipment and with the Police due to arrive at any time lesser beings would have panicked. We did. Fortunately Chris's friend lived on the top floor and we tapped on his bedroom skylight and asked him to go down and let us out. Unfortunately it turned out that it was his parents who had noticed the unlocked door and they were just phoning the Police. He couldn't go and unlock the door without giving the game away so what could we do?

Will Chris and Mike get out of this one? Part 2 in the next edition of Wavelength.



Studio  
London Weekend  
Radio.

Room this time around for a look in the ever increasing Wavelength Mailbag.

Mr R Frost, Felixstowe, Suffolk writes;

"Could we readers have update on Greenpeace and more update on Sealand?" The Roughs Tower is very often in the news, but very little seems to come out of Sealand apart from Press Releases. In September 1986 at Euster's Birthday Party Prince Roy Bates of Sealand discussed his recently announced plans to open 3 radio stations, with an on air date of early 1987. The date was gradually put back, and during the Summer became a Television station. Any broadcasts from Sealand have been threatened by action by the Department of Trade and Industry as Britain now regards Sealand as being within her territorial waters. We don't hear much of the day to day activities of Greenpeace, an organisation which Free Radio Groups have often supported in the past, including Radio Caroline. We would certainly be interested in hearing from any reader who has a contact address or news about Greenpeace activities.

Richard Teversham in Portsmouth has been up to London;

"Checking out the FM dial on November 21st in London and found the best two stations are Kiss FM, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Two jocks worth listening to are Richie Rich and Sammy Lyle 94FM Soul at its best. If on the other hand you prefer Oldies Hits 105.5 is the place to be. Back to Back greats. One DJ Tim Stewart used to be on Short Waves Atlanta Radio, great DJ. While Up in London Time Out Mag gives a full list of whose on like TKO, LWR Time FM, Solar, Sky, JBC. It is really great to hear FM choice where others can't."

Sorry to disappoint you Richard but you've got the wrong man! This Tim Stewart may be better known as Tim Stevens of short wave station Radio Duck.

From Stuart Heathcock in Manchester;

"I think Wavelength is now a really good read and I particularly enjoy the feature length articles" Gosh!

Slightly further afield is David Miller, Dunedin, New Zealand

"The Transmitter circuits book is by Charles Fox and is available from PIN Magazine cost £M 10. The book would be good but does not have any PCB layouts in it. (This is the book you mention in Wavelength August/September 1987) I wrote for copy of Radio is My Bomb at the Hooligan Press, FM Hurricane address in August, which I think is double, thinking it would be sent airmail, it must have been sent surface. If I don't see it before Xmas I will be sending a follow up letter to them. . . Really pleased to see the return of DIY Radio to Wavelength."

David is not the only person who has failed to hear from the publishers of Radio is My Bomb, so we advise anyone else thinking of sending £2.40 for a copy to think again. David is one of a number of readers who have praised the new series of DIY Radio.

Michael Byron from Ballina, County Mayo, Ireland has written us a long, but interesting letter, so I hope that he will excuse us if we shorten it slightly,

"The articles which I enjoyed most were 'DIY Radio' and 'Battle of the Channels' I also found 'on the Bands' interesting. My main interests in this area are Irish, British and European MW and SW news as well as Irish FM News. In my area the two main Free Radio stations are Independent Radio Mayo 738MW using 1000 watts and Midwest Radio on 1233 and 1532kHz MW and 3 FM channels including 97.95. Sometimes I can hear KTK (Donegal) and 96FM and County Sound but their signal is fairly weak. On MW some stations which I heard recently include Glencore Radio (Donegal) 1125kHz, West National Radio 3 (Mullingar and Galway) on 702 and 711kHz. I used to be able to hear Energy 103 and 102 on MW but now I can't as Independent Radio Mayo uses 738mw and Viewpoint/Monique uses 819kHz. Sunshine on 531 closes down and Caroline on 558 can be heard but there is splatter from RTE Radio One on 567. . .

In the Short Wave raids article in Wavelength magazine I read about a raid on Radio Radar on the 13th of September. I heard Radar on this date but I couldn't hear anything about the raid as there was a lot of qrm (interference) from a SSB signal (thought to be aviation) this along with TV Timelapse qrm, poor conditions and the fact I was only using a Sony ICF-35 domestic portable with a homemade random wire antenna didn't help. Recently Radio Ireland on 6310 came in strongly in Ballina. I hadn't heard the signal before for a long time and I hadn't heard it since. . . I use a homemade aerial to improve reception and I use harmonics from another radio's local oscillator to receive SSB. Since I am only 15 years old I can't afford a better receiver. I have seen a Vega on sale cheap in a local shop, this receiver has much better shortwave coverage than my ICF 35 but it doesn't cover the FM band, although I could use the stereo for FM listening however the Vega receiver cannot be used on the mains. The most annoying problem with the ICF 35 is that images of the official 7.1 - 7.3 MHz broadcast band cause interference to weak Free radio signals between 6.2 and 6.4MHz, another problem is that my qth is in an urban area so there is qrm from fluorescent lights in nearby shops during the day, and there is also qrm from a TV set in a nearby pub."

Thankyou Michael, I hope that future articles in the DIY Radio series will be able to point you towards an affordable receiver. I understand that Radio Radar were raided after programming had ceased.

## CHARLIE WOLF

## with Adrian Cooke and Andy Walker

The person who will perhaps be the best remembered of all the Offshore Radio personalities of the eighties is Charlie Wolf. His nightly programmes on Laser 558 were full of both energy and imagination. Adrian Cooke met with Charlie at the Driftback 20 convention, and together with Andy Walker started by asking his opinions on the relaunched Laser Hot Hits. . .

Charlie: I got a couple of tapes which was sent to me in the States. It was different and tough for me to judge. Tommy and I were talking about it, Tommy Rivers, and we were both so very close to it when it was the original Laser that to hear a different one you kinda, they did that wrong, they did that wrong and you know how it is when you leave a company. You're the director of a bus company you leave and the new director's never going to do the job right. There's somethings which I did like and there's a lot I didn't. I think it was starting to sound English in a lot of ways. The disc jockeys, some were okay, but they lacked direction, they needed a programme controller out there to show them how to do it.

Adrian: Would you say that it wasn't Laser reborn, but another station which came along and just happened to call themselves Laser.

Charlie: Yes, Tommy once said to me I don't mind them calling it Hot Hits, anything, Mars but not Laser, because it wasn't.

We left the subject of Laser and went on to talk about Charlie's involvement with the ILR station Radio Mercury who had wanted to hire Charlie, but had difficulties in obtaining a work permit for him forcing Charlie to return to the States from where he presented a number of taped shows for the station.

Charlie: Unfortunately there's a lot of bureaucrats, a lot of upper level people in radio. They kinda work with blinders on and all they see is, Charlie Wolf was on Laser and he took the mickey out of us and they don't look past that to what Charlie Wolf did for the industry and what Charlie Wolf could do for the industry or what Charlie Wolf wants to do for the industry over the years and that's like, we're going to have the last laugh and not let you win.

Adrian: Bureaucracy aside what's your opinion of the ILR Network?

Charlie: A lot of room to grow and it could really be something great. If they let US, who are the programming people do it.

Adrian: If you were given the chance to be programme director at a mythical ILR station

Charlie: Lets say Capital! - Came the swift retort.

Adrian: What changes or improvements would you do to the station there?

Charlie: It's hard to say because you have to look at the current station and situation, one thing I've noticed over here though, it's a stereotype a little they don't know how to market the stations. You've got the Joe Jock show then the Bob Jock show, you don't have 'Capital Radio', Laser, it wasn't the Charlie Wolf Show, it was Laser, maybe Charlie Wolf stuck out a little bit and had his own personality and one thing, and Holly Michaels had hers, but still I didn't come on and say 'Hey the Charlie Wolf show' it was 'Laser 558'.

Adrian: Many ILR stations particularly the country ones will get an ex national name in, and he will become the centre of attraction, do you think that is wrong then?

Charlie: Yes and No. You want stars, look at Howard Stern in New York, but still it isn't the Howard Stern station, it's still K-ROCK. You fit into an overall marketing scheme. I mean as wild as I was as different as I was from everyone else you still knew that when you tuned in Laser 558 at night for Charlie Wolf you still got so much music, and it was the same kinda music you were used to, not the Charlie Wolf Hip Hop Show it was just another show on Laser.

Adrian: It's an obvious question, but how do you compare radio in the United States with radio in the United Kingdom.

Charlie: We're a bit more aggressive. It's like this marketing thing I was telling you about. I wrote a letter to Johnny Lewis before coming over and he sent me back a letter and sent along the Wyvern programming guide, and me

and my programme director just kinda looked at it and had a good laugh, and they were promoting the night show (here Charlie broke into a soothing upper class English accent) Oh Colin with music for those you with the can't sleeps, Oh it was just drivel there's no aggressive marketing. Charlie is now involved with production work at KFMY in Utah so did this mean that his considerable talent as a broadcaster was taking a back seat? Charlie: Yes; he said with an enforced sigh and broke into a quiet laugh - I'm not on the air right now, I do a Sunday shift, but it doesn't really count as anything to me. But Fortunately its making me a living right now, nothing more, but my heart is still on the air and that's where I will return to, at the present time though what KFMY needed was a good production director and that actually, though I didn't do much of it here, that is my forte, and they recognised that and they wanted to utilise those talents, I'd much rather they utilised my other talents.

Adrian: What is the work situation like in America for the aspiring DJ, like yourself maybe in years gone by, when the young american is trying to break into radio, how does he go about that?

Charlie: It's tough, It took me until I got to Laser to really be established which was seven years, it took me three years for my first professional job, hanging out at radio stations. I still find it tough, no one in the States knows who Charlie Wolf is, so unlike here I don't just walk into a radio station and say, hi I'm here, I'm a star and on I go, its a whole different kettle of fish.

Adrian: Do the names Laser and Caroline still pull a great weight in the United States?

Charlie: Not really, There are people who have heard of it and are fascinated by it but they can't have that same feeling about radio they havn't been without radio like people here are so its like, oh on a ship that's interesting, that's nice, you tell a couple of war stories and that's about the extent of it, but people do know about them.

Andy: What's the reaction on the pirate radio ship you had off of New York recently.

Charlie: I thought it was the stupidest damn thing I'd ever heard. The thing was you're not going to compete in New York, there's no way you're going to make any money up against eighty radio stations that are very big time affairs. They were just a bunch of wankers quite frankly I don't know why they did it.

Andy: I read in the press that they were commenting on the state of rock and roll radio in New York and saying how bad it was, is that right?

Charlie: I don't think its that. Always however good it gets there's always going to be someone who doesn't like it. Because everyone has their own taste on how to do things. I mean Gees theres four or five different rock stations, major rock stations, I mean there's legendary rock stations in that town WNEW, Scott Muney who's literally like a fifth Beatle. So it was like a couple of stroppy, young reprobates, I realise that that was really totally silly, or it was in that instance.

It was good to see Charlie back in Britain, a country which he truly loves, and speaks of his time here with great warmth and affection.

Charlie: I just want to say that I love this country I've always appreciated the audience here and I'll never forget them and I'll be back.

